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Paul Testifies Before Government Reform Committee About Social Security Legislation

Washington, D.C. - On Thursday, Congressman Ron Paul testified about a piece of Social Security legislation before the subcommittee on Government Management, Information, and Technology of the Government Reform and Oversight Committee. The testimony centered around Paul's "Freedom and Privacy Restoration Act" (HR 220) which he introduced at the beginning of the 106th Congress. The bill forbids federal or state governments from using the Social Security number for purposes not directly related to administering the Social Security system. Paul said, "No private organization has the power to abuse personal liberty on as massive a scale as the federal government. Government agents have committed most of the major invasions of privacy, from the abuse of IRS files to the abuse of the FBI by administrations of both parties. This legislation is designed to stop the use of the Social Security number as a national ID number." Paul said the Social Security number has been transformed from an administrative device used to administer the Social Security program into a *de facto* national ID number. Most people cannot get a job, get married, or open a bank account without a Social Security number. In 1998, 210 members of Congress even voted to allow states to force citizens to produce a Social Security number before they could exercise their right to vote. Last week, Paul testified before the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security about the abuse of the Social Security number. During that testimony he said that Americans are tired of having their right to privacy continually assaulted. "Since I introduced the 'Freedom and Privacy Restoration Act', my office has received countless calls, letter, faxes, and e-mails from Americans around the country who are tired of having to divulge their Social Security numbers in order to get a job, open bank account, or go fishing," said Paul. "The strong public outrage over the federal banking regulators' 'know your customer' scheme, as well as the attempt to turn state drivers' licenses into national ID cards, and the Clinton Administration's so-called 'medical privacy' proposals all reveal the extent to which the American people oppose the 'surveillance state.'"

